

POLICY BULLETIN CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

CCC-01-07

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SUBJECT: Clarification on the Substitution of NSLP Meals and Use of Offer versus Serve for CACFP Meals Prepared by Schools

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The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) regulations at 7 CFR 226.20(o) give State Agencies (SA) the option to allow institutions that serve meals prepared in schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) to substitute the NSLP menu planning approaches for the CACFP meal pattern requirements. This provision also applies to the use of offer versus serve (OVS). The meal pattern requirements including the use of OVS can be found in the "Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals."

This provision permits the substitution of NSLP meals, including the use of OVS, only to school age children participating in CACFP, who are already familiar with OVS through their participation in NSLP meals during school hours. Although adult day care centers may find it advantageous to contract with a school or School Food SFA for meals, OVS for adult meals must follow the requirements described in the CACFP regulations at 7 CFR 226.20(q). These requirements are specific to the CACFP adult meal pattern and permit adult participants to decline certain food items.

Generally, OVS is not appropriate for preschool children because it may interfere with program nutrition goals, those set by the SA, and the CACFP institution's efforts to introduce new foods to children. Rather, we encourage CACFP institutions to consider using family style service, as described in FNS Instruction 783-9, Rev. 2, as a way to provide younger children some choice in the types and amounts of food selected.

Among the CACFP institutions that may benefit from the use of OVS, include those caring for school age children in outside-school-hours care centers, or at-risk after school care centers. These centers, which may be located in the school or in another location, could be operated by the school or SFA or by another CACFP institution which contracts with the SFA for meals.

If you have any questions, please contact our office at (801) 538-7562.